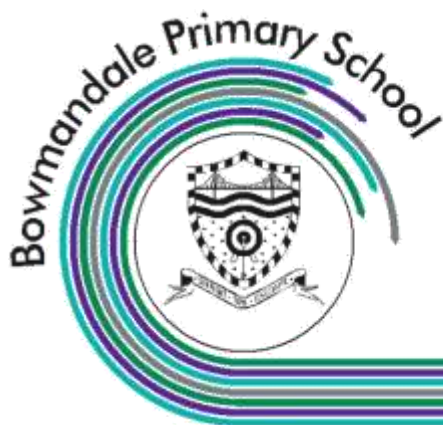




Straight... True... Successful

School Policy Document for Children who are Looked After (CLA)

Designated Teacher: Lesley Lombard

Responsible Governor: Alvin Fernandes

1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to promote educational inclusion for Children who are Looked After (CLA), to enable them to access the full range of educational opportunities available to them and to reach their potential, both academically and personally.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. The responsibility for monitoring and review rests with the Designated Teacher for Children who are Looked After.

2. Rationale

Many children who are in care may have suffered significant emotional distress, trauma, loss, abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, Children who are Looked After are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Nationally, Children who are Looked After significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their social and academic progress is likely to be affected by their adverse childhood experiences, and is compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. Schools play a key role in helping to raise the educational standards and improving the life chances of Children who are Looked After, and in tackling the causes of social exclusion through careful planning, monitoring and evaluation.

Bowmandale Primary School recognises that Children who are Looked After may be at risk of experiencing specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and we are committed to ensuring that they reach their full potential in all areas. We are aware that some Children who are Looked After may have specific difficulties in attendance, home learning, securing funding for extra-curricular activities or obtaining correct uniform and equipment. We also recognise that Children who are Looked After may have very specific needs; they may be coping with trauma, loss, abuse, rejection or attachment difficulties and are likely to be experiencing personal distress and uncertainty.

3. Definition

'Looked After' is a term that refers to children for whom the Local Authority is sharing parental responsibility. This can happen either with parental agreement or when a court makes a Care Order. The child may be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, with other family members or sometimes with their parents. These children are therefore

subject to corporate parenting. This policy includes requirements set out in “*Statutory Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After and previously looked after children, February 2018*”.

4. Objectives

Bowmandale Primary School’s approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of Children who are Looked After (CLA) is based on the following principles:

- An appropriately trained Designated Teacher (DT) is appointed to be responsible for all Children who are Looked After, and those who have previously been Looked After.
- All Children who are Looked After will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child and the child’s Social Worker, which will identify and respond to the child’s individual needs.
- All staff have high expectations for the child, ensuring that they have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Stability and continuity are achieved for the child through a focus on health, wellbeing and social inclusion outcomes and by promoting inclusion.
- All relevant staff, facilitated by the DT, are responsible for recording, monitoring and improving the academic achievement of the child.
- Priority is given to reducing exclusion and promoting attendance.
- All staff, facilitated by the DT, will promote good communication between all those involved in the child’s life and listen to the child’s views, wishes and feelings.
- The child’s confidentiality will be maintained and respected wherever possible.

5. Responsibility of the Headteacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher (DT) for Children who are Looked After (CLA).
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, wellbeing, progress and attendance Children who are Looked After (CLA) and to take actions where any of these aspects fall below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Children who are Looked After (CLA) to all relevant parties.
- Ensure that school staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

6. Responsibility of the Governing Body

- Ensure that all governors are aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Children who are Looked After (CLA).
- Ensure that the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Children who are Looked After (CLA) and that this is reported to governors on a termly basis.
- Ensure that the school’s other policies and procedures support the needs of Children who are Looked After (CLA); e.g. Behaviour, Safeguarding.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher (DT), and that the DT is supported to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.

7. The Role of the Designated Teacher (DT)

- Ensure a smooth transition for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan (PEP) to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker.
- Upon the child transitioning to the school, the DT will ensure that arrangements are put in place to ensure that the child's needs are identified and met. This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed with all relevant people including seeking the child's views, in a timely manner prior to PEP review meetings.
- Maintain an up to date record of the Children who are Looked After (CLA) in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensuring that all necessary information is passed onto other staff as required. This includes copying all relevant staff into CPOMS records.
- Ensure that each Child who is Looked After (CLA) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This may often be the Class Teacher or Learning Mentor, but the child's views will be always sought wherever appropriate.
- Track academic attainment and progress, and target support where appropriate in consultation with the Class Teacher.
- Co-ordinate any support for Children who are Looked After (CLA) through liaison with teaching staff and pastoral staff to ensure that everyone is aware of the personal difficulties and educational disadvantages they may face.
- Establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies through PEP meetings and at other times, where appropriate.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis through CPOMS.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life and encourage Children who are Looked After (CLA) to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- Set up meetings with relevant parties where a child is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion, to ensure that provisions and actions can be put in place to support the pupil's needs.
- Submit termly achievement data to the Local Authority for all Children who are Looked After.
- Ensure the rapid transfer of information between individuals, agencies and if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase of education.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored through liaison with YJ (Attendance Officer).
- Attend training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding Children who are Looked After (CLA).

8. The role of all staff

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Children who are Looked After (CLA), as for all pupils.
- Maintain confidentiality for Children who are Looked After (CLA) and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.

- Work pro-actively to enable Children who are Looked After (CLA) to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of Children who are Looked After (CLA).
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Children who are Looked After (CLA)

9. The use of Pupil Premium Plus Funding

Bowmandale Primary School ensures that the use of Pupil Premium Plus funding is used effectively to support Children who are Looked After (CLA). This can be used in a variety of ways, but essentially, it is always tailored to the individual needs and requirements of each child. Examples of how funding may be used include:

- Interventions to support learning;
- Pastoral support to respond to emotional, behavioural or social needs; either on a small group or 1:1 basis;
- Pastoral interventions such as nurture groups or Forest Schools;
- Relevant resources and equipment to support specific learning needs;
- Discounted costs towards educational visits (when circumstances allow);
- Free after school activities (when circumstances allow)

10. Record Keeping and Information Sharing

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) is initiated within 10 school days of a child arriving at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the child (at least every 6 months). The PEP provides a regular opportunity to review progress, to note any concerns and to ensure other relevant parties are informed accordingly. Copies of reports and other documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at the point of transition. It is vital that the child is aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

Information about Children who are Looked After (CLA) will be shared with school staff on a “need to know” basis through CPOMS, PEP meetings or individual meetings with the Class Teacher. The information to be shared will be agreed at the PEP meeting by the carer, the social worker, school staff and other relevant parties. Once this has been agreed, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

10. Exclusions

Bowmandale Primary School recognised that Children who are Looked After (CLA) are particularly vulnerable to exclusions. Where a child is at risk of exclusion, multi-agency meetings will be arranged with greater frequency to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion. The child’s PEP will reflect strategies to support them. All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and prevent an exclusion from happening.

11. Admission Arrangements

The school recognises that due to care arrangements, Children who are Looked After (CLA) may enter school mid-term. We also recognise the importance of a positive welcome for such children, and where appropriate, additional support and pre-entry visits to help them to settle into the school.

12. Links with other agencies

The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with Children who are Looked After (CLA) including Virtual Schools, Social Care Teams, Educational Psychologist, Health Services, CAMHS.

13. Equality & Equal Opportunities Statement

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their race, gender, disability or ability. Bowmandale Primary School is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from intimidation or harassment and to achieve their full potential.